



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT FIRE MARSHAL'S ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 22, 2022**

SB-132 AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF CONSUMER GRADE FIREWORKS

Representative Horn, Senator Osten, Representative Paolillo, Senator Champagne, Representative Howard, and distinguished members of the Public Safety Committee. My name is Roger Nelson and I am the Fire Marshal for the Bloomfield Center Fire District and currently sit on the Board of Directors for the Connecticut Fire Marshal's Association.

The Connecticut Fire Marshal's Association opposes SB-132 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SALE AND USE OF CONSUMER GRADE FIREWORKS.

The CFMA opposes this bill based on the potential of increased injuries to children, increase in number of calls to firefighters, fire marshals, police officers and EMS staff.

Since 2008, injuries from fireworks have been on the increase. In 2020, deaths from fireworks incidents rose 50% and there were close to 16,000 injuries, about 33% jump from the previous year, for which people were treated at the ER. Approximately 33% of injuries occur to individuals under the age of 15, some of which are innocent bystanders.

In looking at our bordering states, MA allows no fireworks, while RI and NY allow sparkler products similar to current Connecticut law.

Since 2015 in Connecticut, there have been approximately 100 structural related fire as a result of fireworks, causing thousands of dollars worth of damage, (2) fatalities and more than 50 related injuries.

In 2020 there were triple the amount of fireworks calls, causing \$300,000 in property loss, (8) reported injuries, including (2) children, one being an 18 month old infant who died as a result of a structure fire ignited by fireworks. In addition (3) police officers were injured in Hartford when responding to a disturbance in which fireworks were thrown at them, including one which exploded on impact.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this issue.

Table 10. Estimated Fireworks-Related Injuries and Estimated Fireworks Imported into the United States
2005 - 2020

Year	Estimated Injuries	Estimated Fireworks Imports (millions of pounds) ^y	Injuries Per 100,000 Pounds of Fireworks Imported
2020	15,600	255.0	6.1
2019	10,000	255.8	3.9
2018	9,100	278.1	3.3
2017	12,900	247.0	5.2
2016	11,100	262.3	4.2
2015	11,900	279.5	4.3
2014	10,500	219.6	4.8
2013	11,400	180.2	6.3
2012	8,700	201.0	4.3
2011	9,600	228.1	4.2
2010	8,600	199.6	4.3
2009	8,800	200.2	4.4
2008	7,000	208.3	3.4
2007	9,800	260.1	3.8
2006	9,200	272.1	3.4
2005	10,800	275.1	3.9

Source: Injuries from NEISS, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. See Table 1 for further details. Estimated fireworks imports data from the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC), using Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS code 3604.10). Imports include consumer fireworks (1.4G HTS codes 3604.10.90.10 and 3604.10.90.50) and display fireworks (1.3G HTS code 3604.10.10.00). Display fireworks were about 4.7 percent of the total imports in 2020. In addition to imported fireworks used in the United States, there is also a small amount of fireworks manufactured in the United States for domestic consumption; the data for these fireworks is not available from ITC and is not shown in this table.

^yFireworks imports data were downloaded from the ITC website in April 2021. Fireworks imports data subject to change by ITC. These changes have typically been minor.

Fireworks Injuries Are Skyrocketing In The U.S.

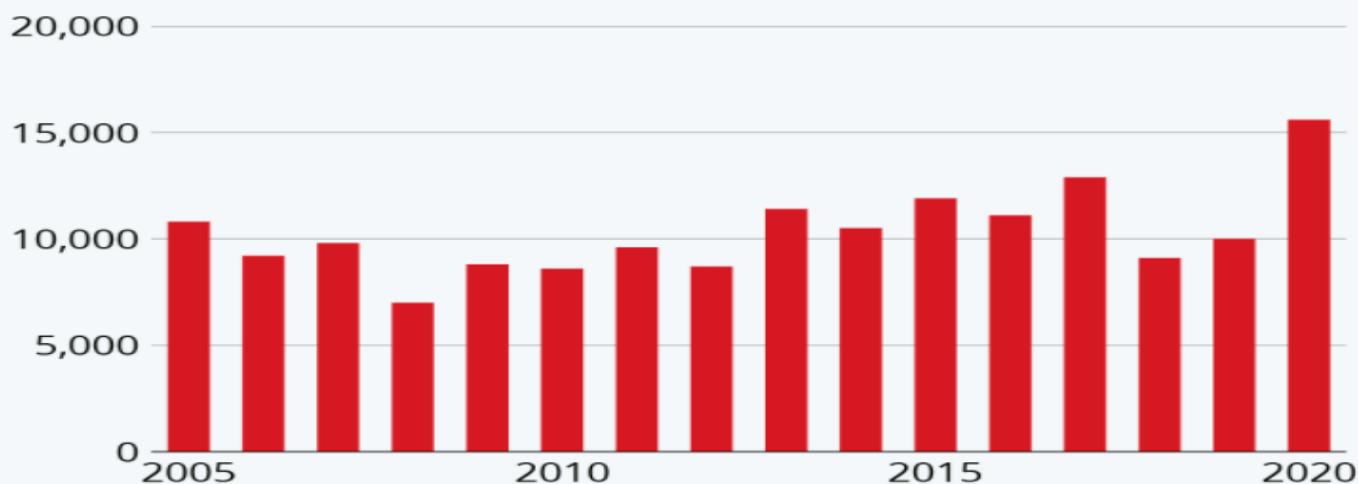
by Jul 1, 2021

As Americans get ready to celebrate the Fourth of July, a report has found that deaths and injuries from fireworks are increasing in the United States. A [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission analysis](#) found that 18 people died in non-occupational fireworks incidents in the U.S. in 2020, an increase on 12 deaths recorded in 2019. Between 2005 and 2020, there were 136 deaths from fireworks misuse or 8.5 deaths on average each year. Along with the growing number of deaths, injuries from the misuse of fireworks are skyrocketing. The report states that 15,600 people were treated in U.S. emergency rooms due to non-occupational fireworks injuries in the U.S. last year compared to around 10,000 in 2019.

66 percent of all fireworks injuries in 2020 [occurred around the Fourth of July period](#), documented between June 21 and July 21. The main culprits were firecrackers and sparklers. During that time frame, hands/fingers accounted for the highest proportion of body part injuries at 30 percent, followed by the head, face or ear at 22 percent while eyes came third with 15 percent. In terms of the type of injury, burns were the most frequent diagnosis by far at 44 percent, while contusions/lacerations and fractures/sprains were also relatively common. The U.S. is currently [experiencing a firework shortage](#) due to supply constraints caused by the pandemic which is set to make this year's selection more expensive and limited. As a result, the industry has warned that supply will be down 30 percent and that could lead to a reduction in hospital admissions in 2021.

Fireworks Injuries Are Skyrocketing In The U.S.

Estimated number of non-occupational fireworks injuries treated in U.S. hospitals



Sources: NEISS, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission



United States
Consumer Product Safety Commission

Fireworks Injuries & Deaths

2020 REPORT

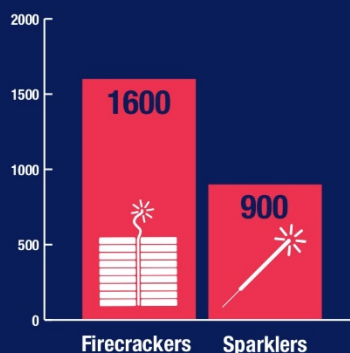
#CelebrateSafely

Fireworks Safety Tips

- ★ Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- ★ Make sure fireworks are legal in your area before buying or using them.
- ★ Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire or other mishap.
- ★ Light fireworks one at a time, then move back quickly.
- ★ Never try to re-light or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully.
- ★ Never use fireworks while impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- ★ More Fireworks Safety Tips:
[cpsc.gov/fireworks](https://www.cpsc.gov/fireworks)

How & When Injuries Occurred

Injuries by Firework Type



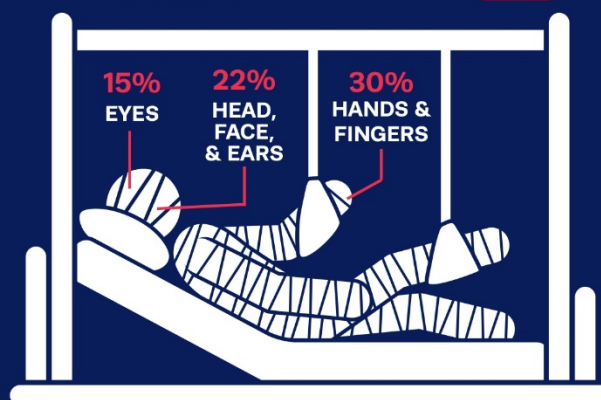
66%

of injuries occurred
in the month around
the July 4th holiday



Most Injured Body Parts

44% of the injuries
were burns



Spike in Fireworks Injuries & Deaths

50%

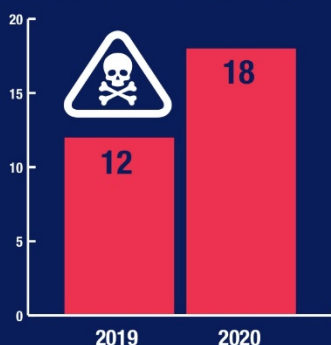
increase in
deaths & injuries
compared to 2019



15,600

people were
treated in ERs for
fireworks injuries

Deaths from Fireworks



Source: U.S. Consumer Product Safety
Commission 2020 Fireworks Annual Report



CPSC.gov
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USCPSC

NOT TO FORGET OUR VETERANS AND PET OWNERS

Veterans with PTSD & Fireworks

In a simple Facebook poll with disabled Veterans, we asked:

“As a Veteran, do random fireworks (not organized displays like Independence Day) trigger your PTSD or cause you distress?”

29% - Yes

31% - Sometimes

40% - No



Several Vets also expressed their thoughts. Melanie Molien, a Army Veteran who served from 1998-2006 including in Operation Iraqi Freedom 2003-04, says “The shows don't bother me because it's expected. **Random firecrackers on non holidays really** trigger me. I get super anxious and paranoid until I know the source of the noise.”

YOUR BOX OF TRICKS
...is our worst nightmare



**Are fireworks
necessary?**